Inventory of Materials

Topic: County History W. Va.

Title: Development of Pocahontas County

Author: Rella F. Yeager

Date Submitted: _____ Length: 660 Words

Status:

Editor: _____

Contents: Fairly complete account of the Development of Pocahontas County. Gives story of purchase of Marlin's Bottom by Col. John McNeal, building of Greenbrier Railroad, first newspaper, bank, telephone; natural resources etc.

Source:

Consultant:

Reliability:

File: _____

Folder: _____

Mrs. Nella F. Yeager

Nella Yeager

From notes taken from the Diary of Captain H. as Yeager

Nella Yeager

-5-

US 219

6

DEVELOPMENT OF POCAHONTAS COUNTY

(The facts concerning the development of this county in the last decade of the nineteenth century which were momentous years for Pocahontas County.)

In December 1890 a great snow fell known as the "winter of the deep snow;" it lay on the ground to a depth of more than three feet. While that deep snow lay on the ground the late Colonel John T. McGraw of Grafton made a visit to this county and purchased the farms known as Marlins Bottom for a town site, now known as Marlinton and the county seat of Pocahontas.

At the time Col. McGraw purchased Marlins Bottom, historic Huntersville was the County seat. The purchase of the town site by Colonel McGraw was the first intimation that county people had of a proposed railway development. Colonel McGraw, who had invested largely in lands elsewhere in the county never ceased trying to interest capitalists in this county and develop it with a railroad. His tireless energy was rewarded. The Greenbrier Railway was built and finished to Marlinton in 1901. The Coal and Iron was built soon after to connect with it at Durbin. In two years Pocahontas County changed from being one of the few counties in the State without a railroad to a county having the greatest railway mileage of any county in the state.

Marlinton began to improve at once. It was incorporated at the April Term of Court, 1900, and held its first election of officers May 5th 1900.

The first newspaper to be published in the county was the Pocahontas Times founded in 1882 at Huntersville and moved to

Marlinton in 1892. The Pocahontas-Herald was published in 1894 at Huntersville and later at Marlinton and ceased to be published in 1896.

The first telephone to be built in the county was the Marlinton and Beverly telephone line finished to Marlinton in August 1899. That same year telephone lines were built along all the principal roads of the county.

The first Bank to go into business in the county was the Bank of Marlinton in 1899 and later in the same year, the Pocahontas Bank was opened. For more than a year these Banks carried in large sums of money by special messengers from the nearest express stations from forty five to fifty seven miles distant, over lonely roads. At the time of the railroad development the natural resources had never been touched. Vast areas of iron ore land in the east of the county will some day make Pocahontas County famous as an iron field.

It was discovered in the nineties that Pocahontas County has a vast supply of marble which is equal in value to any marble ever found in the United States and it will some day be ranked high among the marble deposits of the world. It was reported by specialists in marble that the Pocahontas Marble was not good. The best evidence that we have that the report was false is that they could not purchase it. The citizens of Pocahontas County know that they have treasures in Marble Mountain. In this great mountain of marble in Pocahontas County and extending into Randolph County we find white, brown and a beautiful green marble. When the time comes for Pocahontas citizens to develop it, the right kind of capitalists will share in it. Capitalists who will not want

to take over the great marble area and take the county's resources and money to some distant city. Let the shipping point be here and by the citizens.

The bulk of the timber has been taken out and floated down the Greenbrier River by the St. Lawrence Boom and Manufacturing Company, having removed in this manner a quarter of a billion feet of white pine.

The walnut and cherry have been taken out by rafting on the Greenbrier which was once an important industry, rafting floods in the river being anxiously watied for.

There were a number of skillful pilots who could thread their way with a raft of 50,000 feet of lumber between the rocks of this swift river.